

## METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR PERFORMING EMERGENCY EXTRICATIONS

### CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

*Am* [0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application serial number 10/125,202 filed April 18, 2002, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

*now Patent NO. 6,722,176*  
*DEW*

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention relates generally to rescue tools and more particularly, to methods and apparatus for performing emergency extrications.

[0003] The purpose of an emergency extrication is to remove an injured victim from a damaged structure, in an orderly and efficient manner that does not facilitate increasing injuries to the victim. Powered portable rescue tools, such as the "POWER HAWK®" which is manufactured and sold by Curtiss Wright Flight Systems, Inc., of Fairfield, N. J., and the "JAWS OF LIFE®", which is manufactured and sold by Hurst Performance, Inc., of Warminster, PA, are specialized tools used by rescue personnel to extricate accident victims from vehicles, buildings, and other structures which otherwise impose a difficult or nearly impossible means of egress. These tools typically develop spreading or ramming forces for opening or forcing apart inoperable doors, damaged structures, or blocked pathways.

[0004] However, the distance or range over which the spreading or cutting force can be applied is limited to the maximum spreading distance between the ends of the rescue tool. In situations where a larger opening is required, or where a suitable brace, prop, or support is available but located beyond the expandable reach of the rescue tool, the tool could be rendered virtually ineffective. Parts of an automobile, such as the door or steering wheel, may also be so badly damaged and contoured that the expandable range of the rescue tool is insufficient to extricate a victim.